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## THE TUBERCULOSIS SITUATION IN DENVER, COLORADO

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DR. PRYOR has truly said: "We must care for the consumptive in the right place, in the right way, and at the right time, until he is cured, instead of as now, in the wrong place, in the wrong way, and at the wrong time, until he is dead." In this day of agitation and proposed legislation for the good of persons, the problem of the "white plague" should and does hold no mean place. This is a problem for the cities to solve, for there we see it in its worst aspect: crowded conditions and unsanitary dwelling-places, which are frequently not relieved because of negligence on the part of those to whom the city's health is intrusted. All who study this problem will agree with Robert Hunter when he says: "It is the duty of society to care for the victims of this disease, because society alone, through its Board of Health and governmental agencies, can disinfect tenements, can compel notification of diseases, can confiscate sweat-shop garments, and can remove centres of infection by powers which it alone has." That society is recognizing its duty and rising to the occasion is evidenced by the sanitary measures instituted and enforced in the large cities, and agitated in many of the smaller ones.

According to the last annual report issued by the Department of Health of the city of Denver, five hundred and sixty persons died from tuberculosis, thirty-three of whom contracted the disease in the state of Colorado. The Health Commissioner of Denver has stated that probably forty per cent. of the sick in the city are suffering from tuberculosis, usually of the lungs, and that the great majority of these sufferers are immigrants.

From fifteen to twenty-eight per cent. of the patients treated at the office of the County Physician are tubercular (the majority being in the last stage of the disease), and show a residence in the state of from one to four months.

The Free Dispensary connected with the Denver-Gross Medical College cares for, on an average, from twenty-five to thirty-three and a third per cent. of tubercular patients, many of whom are running a temperature, and have been residents of the state for less than a year. Fully ninety per cent. of the cases treated at the Central Dispensary are tubercular.

To treat this vast army of sufferers which other sections of the country are pouring into Colorado, there are various sanitariums situated in Denver and adjacent districts. The Department of Health coöperates with the Visiting Nurse Association in fighting tuberculosis, and expectation in public places is prohibited by law.

Patients suffering from tuberculosis in all stages are admitted to the County Hospital, though, owing to lack of room, they are not desired.

The County Farm, situated near Brighton, has not been utilized yet, though the question is being agitated.

The National Jewish Hospital is open to patients in the incipient stage, who are unable to pay for their care. Though supported by the Jews of the country, no distinction is made as to nationality or creed. Examination papers are filled out by physicians located in different cities throughout the country where the prospective patient resides.

According to the last yearly report, 225 patients were cared for during that year. Of this number, 141 were discharged. Over nineteen per cent. recovered; fifty-two and a half per cent. improved; slightly over twenty-eight per cent. failed to show any improvement, and three were readmitted. No deaths occurred. The average length of time that these patients remained in the hospital was six and a half months each. None but trained nurses care for the patients, and the diet is liberal, milk and eggs having a prominent place on the menu. Paper sputum cups are used, which are gathered and burned twice daily; the rooms are fumigated with formaldehyde, and all soiled linen, as well as the patients' clothing, is sterilized. Though the wards are roomy and airy, some of the patients sleep out of doors. The cornerstone of the new Woman's Pavilion was laid July 22, 1906.

The Evangelical-Lutheran Sanitarium is a farm situated at Edgewater, a suburb of Denver. The majority of the patients live in tents. Between thirty and thirty-five patients have been cared for during the year. The patient applies personally to the Board of Directors, and is examined by the physician on the Board. Patients in all stages of the disease are admitted, and if too poor to pay, the synod of the place where he comes from bears the expense of his care. The regular charges are twenty-five dollars a month, and thirty dollars if it is necessary to give much personal attention. Despite the fact that patients in advanced stages are admitted, and that there were seven deaths during the past year, about fifty per cent. were discharged to go to work, and fully sixty per cent. of those remaining showed improvement. An experienced nurse is employed, and, when necessary, graduate nurses are

called. The diet is generous, and rest enforced as the needs of the patient demand. Paper sputum cups are used, which are burned; the tents are fumigated with formaldehyde, and all soiled linen is sterilized.

The Jewish Consumptives' Relief Society Sanitarium has commenced its second year. This institution is unique in that it derives its support from the great mass of the working people. It is situated about a mile from the west end of the Larimer Street car-line, and accommodates fifty patients, who are admitted through the Denver office. Like the Lutheran Sanitarium, patients in all stages of the disease are admitted, and the time for remaining is indefinite. Of the ninety-seven patients admitted during the last year, fifty-two improved, twenty-nine did not improve, in ten cases the disease was arrested, and six died. There is no charge for treatment, and one experienced nurse looks after the welfare of the patients. The diet is liberal, and each patient is required to rest for one hour after each meal. Paper sputum cups are used and burned, and formaldehyde is used for fumigating.

Fully one-half of the work of the Visiting Nurse Association is among tubercular patients. The association has established the card system of registration for each case, similar to that used by the Chicago Visiting Nurse Association, and the nurses give instruction on diet, sanitation, and the disposal of the sputum, and after death or removal fumigate the infected quarters. A pin map of the city has lately been made, which shows the location of each case registered with the association.

About two miles from the edge of the town, the Young Men's Christian Association has established a farm for the care of tubercular patients in the incipient stage of the disease. The farm can accommodate about fifty patients, and admission is gained through the Young Men's Christian Association of Denver. Each patient is charged twenty-five dollars a month for his care, and an indefinite time allowed, provided there is improvement. The diet is as usual, plain but liberal, with plenty of milk and eggs. Paper sputum cups are used and burned, the tents are fumigated with formaldehyde, and the clothes and bedding are sterilized. The report for the year just closed states that fifty-three per cent. of the patients showed improvement, and thirty-seven per cent. are now earning their living. Those who are able to work—and many of the duties of the farm are done by the patients—are paid for their services, so that during the first year of its existence three hundred dollars was returned to the boys for services rendered, while at the end of the second year fifteen hundred dollars had been paid out for the same purpose. Lately, a pavilion has been erected for those temporarily confined to their beds. There is a resident physician, and the

camp, which is incorporated as a town, is managed by the boys according to city government form.

The Agnes Memorial Sanitarium, which is located at Montclair, a suburb of Denver, accommodates one hundred and fifty patients, and application for admission is made to the medical director at the institution. The time allowed for improvement is usually six months, though some patients are kept for a longer period, and those are admitted who are in the incipient and middle stages of the disease. The charges are from seven dollars a week up, which includes nursing care, food, and medical attention.

Medicines are furnished at cost. The diet is liberal, and rest is enforced, especially before each meal. Paper sputum cups are used, which are gathered twice daily and burned, the holders being sterilized by boiling. Formaldehyde is used for fumigating the rooms, and steam and hot air for the bedding and clothes, while all dishes are boiled after use. There are three forms of outdoor treatment used: tent, porch, and lean-to, the last being a shed-like building facing the south. Approximately, fifty per cent. of the cases admitted have improved, and seventy-four per cent. been cured.

The Oakes' Home and Adams Memorial, the former housing one hundred and ten and the latter forty-three patients, are each in the nature of a home, with a nurse on duty in each place. In Heartsease, the infirmary of the Oakes' Home, nurses are on duty all the time. No records are kept by the management of the patients or their condition and improvement. Patients in all stages of the disease are admitted, and the diet is liberal. Porcelain spittoons which contain a solution of bichloride of mercury are in use and these are emptied and washed twice daily. Each room is fumigated and cleaned after a patient leaves, and all bedding and linen is sterilized by steam. At the Oakes' Home, patients pay about twenty-five dollars a week in the infirmary, and from forty-five dollars a month up in the Home. The Adams Memorial charges each patient twenty-five dollars a month.

This, in brief, is a summary of the tuberculosis situation in Denver, and what the city is doing to meet the exigencies of the work. Besides these already mentioned, there are many small private sanitariums for the care of these cases. Owing to the fact that it is, as yet, not compulsory to report these cases to the Department of Health, accurate statements are impossible, and statistics are more or less vague, but as "he who runs may read" it is obvious that a vast army of sufferers from all sections of the world are continually pouring into Colorado, making the problem a growing one, which the future will be obliged to grapple with, sooner or later.